

A DEADLY DILEMMA

(Continued from Front Page.)

He knew how it to be destroyed by this dilemma, agonizing, pulling things. Was not any man the right to try and save the lives he loves best, no matter at what risk or peril to others? He asked himself this question, too, vaguely, instinctively, with the rapid beats of a life and death struggle; and himself with horror, for he had so strenuously left now to do one thing or the other—to remove the obstacle from the path where he had laid it or to warn the driver. One second alone remained and then all would be over. On it came, roaring, flaring, glaring, with its great billows now passing out around the corner—a terrible, fiery dragon,不住的，uncontrollable, bursting down in mad gale upon the pole or Nettie.

Which of the two should it be—the pole or Nettie?

And still he waited, and still he trembled. What—what could he do? Oh, heaven be merciful! Even as the engine swept, snorting and puffing steam, around the corner, he doubted yet—he doubted and trembled. He reasoned with his own conscience in the quick shorthand of thought. So far as intent was concerned he was guiltless. It wouldn't be a murder of malice preposse. When he laid that log there in the way of the train he never believed—no, never even knew—it was a train with a living freight of men and women he was trying to imperil. He felt it to be merely as a mad engine unattached. He realized only Nettie's pressing danger. He was bound now to undo what he had innocently done—and leave Nettie to perish! Must he take away the post, and be Nettie's murderer?

It was a cruel dilemma for any man to have to face. If he had half an hour to debate and decide, now, he might perhaps have seen his way a little clearer. But with that hideous thing actually rushing, red and writhing, on his sight—why—he clapped his hands to his ears. It was too much for him—too much for him.

CHAPTER III.



Illustrated.

And yet he must face it and act or remain passive, one way or the other. With a despondent effort he made up his mind at last just as the train burst upon him, and all was over.

He made up his mind and acted accordingly.

As the engine turned the corner the driver looking ahead in the clear evening light saw something in front that made him start with sudden horror and alarm. A telegraph pole lay stretched at full length, and a man, unknown, stood agonized by its side, stooping down, as he thought, to catch and move it. There was no time left to stop her now; no time to avert the threatened catastrophe. All the driver could do in his haste was to put the brake on hard and endeavor to lessen the force of the inevitable concussion. But even as he looked and wondered at the sight, putting on the brake meanwhile with all his might and main, he saw the man in front perform, to his surprise, an heroic action. Rushing full upon the line, straight before the bright lights of the advancing train, the man unknown lifted up the pole by main force, and repositioning its end, as it were, wildly in the driver's face, buried the huge bulk back with a terrible effort to the side of the railway. It fell with a crash, and the man fell with it. There was a second's pause, while the driver's heart stood still with terror. Then a jar—a thud—a sharp scratch into the soil. A wheel was off the line. They had met with an accident.

For a moment or two the driver only knew that he was shaken and hurt, but not severely. The engine had left the track and the carriage, by reason of the shock, had rebounded on to the line. The base of the great timber had struck the near side wheel and sent it off the track in a vain effort to overturn it. But the brake had already stopped the pace and broken the force of the shock, so the visible damage was very insconsiderable. They must look along the carriages and find out who was hurt. And, above all things, what had become of the man who had been of the man who had so nobly saved them? For the very last thing the engine driver had seen of Ughtred as the train stopped short was that the man who flung the pole from the track before the advancing engine was knocked down by its approach, while the train to all appearance passed bodily over him. His good or evil, Ughtred had made his decision as hot as the risk of his own life. As the train dashed on with its living freight aboard his native instinct of preserving life got the better of him in spite of himself. He couldn't let those innocent souls lie by his own act—through if he removed the pole and Nettie was killed he didn't know himself how he could ever live it.

He gazed with all his heart that the man might kill him. The general and the driver ran hastily along the train. Nobody was hurt, though many were shaken or slightly bruised. Even the carriages had received with a few small cracks. The laboratory smash was nothing very serious.

But the man with the pole. Their names, their friends. Where was he at this time? What on earth had become of him?

They looked along the line. They passed the truck in vain. They had examined it by stages. Not a trace could be found of him.

After looking long and seriously again and again, the general and the driver both gave it up. They had run the road ultimately—and a dash about, but

the ball moment of the present, as well as no sign of blood was to be discerned along the track. The mysterious being who, as they all believed, risked his own life to save them had vanished as he had come, one might almost say by a miracle.

And indeed, as a matter of fact, Ughtred Carnegie fell on the track before the advancing engine he thought for a moment it was all up with him. He was glad of that, too, for he had murdered Nettie. He had saved that train, but he had murdered Nettie. It would dash on now unresisted and crush his darling to death. It was better he should die, having murdered Nettie. So he closed his eyes tight and waited for it to kill him.

But train passed on, jarring and swaying, partly with the action of the brakeman, though partly, too, with the wheel digging into the ground at the side it passed on and went over him altogether, coming as it did so to a sudden standstill.

As it stopped a fierce joy rose up

in Ughtred's soul. Thank heaven, all was well. He breathed once more easily. He had fallen on his back across the sleepers in the middle of the track.

It was not really the train that had knocked him down at all, but the recoil of the telegraph post. The engine and carriages had gone over him safely. He wasn't seriously hurt. He was only bruised and sprained and jarred and shaken.

Rising up behind the train as it slackened, he ran hastily along the off side toward where Nettie lay still and unconscious on the line in front of it. No body saw him run past, and no wonder, either, for every eye was turned toward the near side and the obstruction. A person running fast by the opposite windows was very little likely to attract attention at such a moment. Every step pained him, to be sure, for he was bruised and stiff, but he ran on none the less till he came up at last to where Nettie lay. There he bent over her eagerly. Nettie raised her head, opened her eyes and looked. In a moment the vague sense of a terrible catastrophe averted came somehow over her. She flung her arms around his neck. "Oh, Ughtred, you've come back!" she cried in a torrent of emotion.

"Yes, darling," Ughtred answered, his voice half choked with tears, "I've come back to you now forever and ever."

He lifted her in his arms and carried her some little way off up the left hand path. His heart was very full. 'Twas a terrible moment. For as yet he hardly knew what harm he might have done by his fatal act. He only knew he had tried his best to undo the wrong he had half unconsciously wrought; and if the worst came he would give himself up now like a man to offended justice.

But the worst did not come. Blind fate had been merciful. Next day the papers were full of the accident to the Great Southern express; equally divided between denunciation of the miscreant who had placed the obstruction in the way of the train, and admiration for the heroic but unrecognized stranger who had rescued from death so many helpless passengers at so imminent a risk to his own life or safety. Only Ughtred knew that the two were one and the same person. And when Ughtred found out how little harm had been done by his infatuated act—an act he felt he could never possibly explain in its true light to any other person—he thought it wisest on the whole to lay no claim to either the praise or the censure. The world could never be made to understand the terrible dilemma in which he was placed—the one sided way in which the problem at first presented itself to him—the deadly struggle through which he had passed before he could make up his mind, at the risk of Nettie's life, to remove the obstacle. Only Nettie understood, and even Nettie herself knew no more than this—that Ughtred had risked his own life to save her.—Strand Magazine.

An Experiment with a Bee Casterine. One day a celebrated naturalist entered the shop of the late Charles Jarmach, the noted London collector of animals, and said, "Now, Jarmach, about the muscular power of the bee constructor—I suspect it has been exaggerated." "Not a bit, sir," said the collector, taking a very fine specimen out of a box. "He seems very lazy and sleepy," said the professor. "I don't think he could exert himself in this cold climate if he tried." "You bet, sir," Jarmach said, and wound him gently around the professor's body. He laughed. "I thought so, Jarmach," he says. "I feel nothing." But presently he sings out, "Take him off, Jarmach! take him off, man; he's strangling me!" so Jarmach just caught hold of the bee's tail and unwound him off the professor's ring by ring.

When he got his breath again, the professor admitted there was more "local muscularity" about the creature than he had suspected. "Now, sir," said Jarmach afterward, "that bee was half dead and stupid, for he had just swallowed two rabbits, six guinea pigs and thirteen pounds of raw beef. If he'd been here, it's my belief he'd have swallowed the professor himself bodily, for he was a small gentleman."—London Letter.

The Past. His arms with strong and firm embrace Her pretty form inflow. And she has blushed her sweet countenance When he his story told.

"And you will surely keep your troth" Said she with drowsy air. "Hold him close and quick replied,

"Yes, by you sin I swear."

A year passed by, his heart grew cold

And love no longer held the hold;

She awoke him false, but the fact is this,

It was a slippery sin.

—New York World.

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